



Alberta Special Crops



Newsletter

Issue 17

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Western Canadian Natural Health Products Research Directory - Now Available on SNN Website

Through funding assistance from the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) we were able to commission the completion of a directory of researchers and research activities in the area of Natural health products (including nutraceuticals and functional foods) in Western Canada. The directory listing was compiled by:

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The directory is organized in three categories:

1. Alphabetical Listing by Researcher
2. Researcher listing by Province
3. Researcher Listing by Research Category

The directory is available for downloading on the SNN website at: www.nutranet.org

We are currently constructing a "search" capacity for the website which will make it easier to find specific information. In addition, we hope to

secure additional funding to expand the site across Canada and to add additional and more detailed information on research activities.

Please circulate the availability of this information to others that may be interested.

If you know of any research activities or researchers that were not included, please have them contact either myself or Carol Ann so that we may update this directory.

AVEC - New Direction

The former Agriculture Value-added Engineering Centre (AVEC) will now be known as the Centre for Agri-Industrial Technology (CAIT).

As part of the Sector Review process, the Processing Industry Division has investigated the opportunities presented by the development of value-added products for industrial and/or non-food applications. A paper entitled "Developing a Non - Food Processing Industry in Alberta" was prepared by Division staff and submitted for consideration.

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Alberta is strategically positioned to take advantage of opportunities in non-traditional agricultural processing, including:

- ▶ Opportunities in agriculture products as input substitutes in manufacturing and consumer products (i.e. bioplastics)
- ▶ Creation of new markets based upon new developments in agriculture processing (i.e.: industrial enzymes)
- ▶ New uses for agriculture materials for cosmetic and health care applications.

These opportunities will not be accomplished without a coordinated effort on behalf of industry, the research community and government. In order to focus our efforts on these opportunities, the mandate of the former Agriculture Value-added Engineering Centre (AVEC) has been expanded. The new name for this unit, the "Center for Agri-Industrial Technology" (CAIT) is intended to reflect this enhanced mandate. While continuing to provide engineering services related to value added processing and the post harvest handling of crops, CAIT will evaluate other opportunities for the growth of Alberta's agri-food industry.

Over the past six months a significant amount of new and re-conditioned equipment has been purchased for CAIT operations. The processing equipment includes a Carter Day cylinder separator, a Carter Day precision sizer, a Vincent horizontal screw press, a Codema impact huller, a Satake pearly, a Renn roller mill and a WP twin screw extruder. New analytical instrumentation includes a Brookfield digital viscometer, a vacuum oven and a Forefront Graphics imaging system. This equipment combined with the equipment previously acquired by AVEC provides CAIT with the basic tools required to fulfill their mandate.

CAIT is staffed with experienced personnel with the skills and ability to provide a wide range of services to Alberta's agricultural processing industry. These services include the post harvest handling of crops, environmental issues and the development of industrial products. CAIT will complement the value added developmental work

done by the other Food Processing Development Centre operations in Leduc and Brooks

Connie Phillips - Acting Manager

Brenda Gregor - Administrative Support

Marshall Eliason - Project Engineer

John Chang - Project Engineer

Hong Qi - Research Engineer

John Kienholz - Engineering Technologist

Carla Brenner - Engineering Technologist

Aaron Bischoff - Engineering Technologist (part time)

The CAIT is located at 6312- 50th Street in Edmonton, T6B 2N2

Telephone (780) 427-8764, Fax 427-4852

2001 CICILS/IPTIC Biennial Convention

(International Pulse Trade Industry Conference)

June 6-8, 2001, Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Dr. Stan Blade, New Crop Development Unit, Plant Industry Division

What was the meeting about?

The Convention is a meeting of the major stakeholders in the global pulse industry. The 400 attendees were from all parts of the world. The meeting was about what is currently happening in the pulse industry as far as production, trade and processing are concerned.

Why did I attend the meeting?

The CICILS/IPTIC meeting is held every two years in a different part of the world. Canada (and Alberta) has increased its pulse crop production dramatically in the past decade. Canada is now the leading exporter of field pea, lentil and chickpea, which makes our country a major force in the global pulse industry. We recognize that we are in a constant battle for market share with other pulse

production areas. We also know that we have to keep looking for new ways to serve our markets, and this group of people are the primary buyers who could be engaged to learn about what other types of crops or crop characters could be of interest for existing and potential markets.

Information gathered from the meeting:

- ▶ Canada's huge increase in production is still a shock to the traditional pulse trading families based in Europe, the Middle East and South Asia.
- ▶ Middle East accounts for 4% for world population but accounts for 25% of the world's imports of pulses and cereals.
- ▶ Even though our pea acreage in western Canada exceeded 3 million acres in 2000, there was almost no carry out of crop. It is good to know that there is a continued and increasing demand (domestically and internationally) for our field pea production.
- ▶ There are many problems associated with production in Europe (Common Agricultural Policy does not favor pulse production), Turkey (currency devaluation) and India (greater returns to producers who produce cereals due to government subsidies). The pulse market is stable with a tendency to slight growth, but only Canada and Australia are pushing hard to take these markets. India is an interesting case where a slight increase in domestic production can severely limit Canadian exports to the country.
- ▶ Mexico produces some of the highest quality kabuli chickpea in the world, but is a net importer of lentils and beans.
- ▶ European buyers demand a high level of quality (stones, etc.) and insist on GMO-free product. There was a major discussion that the "Protocol on Biosafety" is probably a useful document for the international pulse industry. A European presentation was also given on "Emerging Issues in Food Safety in Europe and their Implications for the Pulse Trade".
- ▶ Canada still has room to increase its markets as we diversify production within the pulse crops.

- ▶ Prof. Mees van Doughen from Soufflet Negoce in France gave an excellent presentation on pulse inclusion in animal diets. Protein consumption in Europe for animals is equivalent to 20 million hectares of soybean. The recent ban on bone meal has led to increased protein crop imports from outside Europe.
- ▶ The industry had some very frank discussions about how the logistics of the trade are not working. Sellers and buyers had some very open arguments about how payments for shipments, quality of shipments and why there seemed to be increased disputes (it was stated that 60% of shipments are disputed!). One development has been a Canadian-led effort to standardize aspects of pulse quality and nomenclature. This is being headed by the Canadian Grain Commission's Dr. Jim Daun, and each of Canada, the U.S., Australia and Europe have a breeder and a food scientist on the panel that has been convened to deal with this issue.
- ▶ Marlene Boersch, Past President of Pulse Canada predicts that by 2010, Canada could include 25% of total crop land in pulse crops, and that by 2005 pulse production will be worth double of what it is today!

Alberta Specialty Crops 2000 Survey Results Published

To address some of the data and information needs of the Specialty Crops industry in Alberta, the Statistics and Data Development Unit of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development has been conducting an annual Specialty Crops Survey. Now into its eighteenth year, the survey attempts to capture data on area (seeded and harvested acres), yield and production for the various types of specialty crops grown.

Data obtained through the survey are used primarily to generate related provincial and sub-provincial estimates. In turn these estimates are used to validate some of the estimates generated by

Statistics Canada, as well as to provide industry and other stakeholders with benchmark statistics for some of the "new" and emerging Specialty Crops grown in the province.

The **"Alberta 2001 Specialty Crop Report"** carries a special significance. It not only contains historical data on seeded and harvested acres, yield and production but presents information on "Market Outlook for Selected Specialty Crops"; "Economics of Specialty Crop Production (dry field peas and chickpeas"; and highlights of "Special Crops Program (Edmonton, Barrhead, Brooks and Beaverlodge)".

Some of the highlights of the Report are:

- ▶ Specialty crops acreage continued to increase in 2000 reaching about ONE million acres in Alberta. It represented an increase of 31% from 764,000 acres in 1999.
- ▶ The upward trend of specialty crop acreage can also be seen in other provinces in Western Canada. In 2000, a total of 7.28 million acres of specialty crops were harvested in Western Canada.
- ▶ Dry field peas remains the largest specialty crop in 2000 at about 3 million acres harvested.
- ▶ Lentils was the second largest specialty crop in Western Canada at 1.7 million acres harvested.
- ▶ The estimate for mustard seed area was 0.55 million acres harvested.
- ▶ Canary seed harvested acreage was estimated at 0.4 million acres.
- ▶ Saskatchewan remained the largest producer of specialty crops in 2000 at 5.4 million acres harvested.
- ▶ Dry field peas area harvested in 2000 in Saskatchewan was 2.22 million acres followed by lentils at 1.64 million acres and 650,000 acres of chickpeas (the new Cinderella crop on the Prairies).

Copies of the **"Alberta 2001 Specialty Crop Report"** can be obtained from:

Statistics and Data Development Unit
Economics and Competitiveness Division
Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
#303, 7000 - 113 street
Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6
Tel: (780) 422 - 2903

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Special Crops Product Team

The Special Crops Product Team represents a cross-section of specialists from Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. It is a liaison between industry and government. The Team's mission is to lead departmental activities in Special Crops, consistent with industry objectives, in response to diversification, value-added and market place opportunities.

Members and phone numbers.

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The "Special Crops" newsletter is published four times per year. Please direct any questions, comments or suggestions for story ideas to:

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The newsletter is also available on the Internet at:

<http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/crops/special/scnews/index.html>



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